section of N.H.-5. For four laning of Chandikhol-Balasore section of N.H.-5 funds are earmarked from Cess Fund.

(c) Four laning of Bhubaneswar-Cuttack-Jagatpur of NH-5 is targeted for completion by June, 2000. Jagatpur-Chandikhol section of N.H.-5 is targeted for completion by Feb, 2003 and for Chandikhol-Balasore and Khurda-Bhubaneswar section of N.H.-5 detailed engineering is nearing completion. Pre-qualification of civil contractors is in progress.

Fund for maintenance of National Highways

5442. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have decided to create a fund for financing the maintenance of National Highways;

(b) if so, what are the salient features of the fund; and

(c) what are the norms finalized for operating the fund?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) It has been decided that 50% of the cess of Re. 1.00 per liter on High Speed Diesel (HSD) will be spent on development of rural roads. Out of the balance fund *i.e.* 50% of the cess on HSD and the entire cess of Re. 1.00 per liter on petrol, 30% will be spent on the development and maintenance of State sector roads and 70% will be spent on the development and maintenance of National Highways, construction of rail-over-bridges/rail-under-bridges and safety works at unmanned level crossings.

(c) Finalisation of norms for operating the fund is at preliminary stage and hence no details can be given.

Completion of Trivandrum by-pass

5443. SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN: Will'the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to take up the second stage of Trivandrum by-pass and remaining stages of Quilan and Alleppey by-passes; and

(b) if so, by when?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) The works are in various stages of pre-constraction activities, hence the date of commencement of construction can not be indicated.

Development of Ports

5444. SHRI ANANTA SETHI: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether port-wise plan has been formulated for development in Ninth Five Year Plan;

(b) if so, the fund estimated for development of Paradeep Port in that plan period; and

(c) the details of the amount released so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. An outlay of Rs. 1200 crores has been approved for development of Paradeep Port during the Ninth Five Year Plan.

(c) In the first three years of Ninth Plan, an expenditure of Rs. 552.82 crores has been incurred by Paradeep Port Trust on their plan schemes.

Modernisation of National Highways

5445. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that National Highways span about 52010 Kms. throughout the country;

(b) whether it is a fact that these highways cater for about 40 per cent of the total road traffic;

(c) whether it is also a fact that these roads are in a poor state and in urgent need of broadening, repair and modernisation of safe standards; and

(d) if so, what are the Government plans and time frame for completion of the modernisation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) Yes, Sir.